

# Undead Divides: An Archaeology of Walls in *The Walking Dead*

Howard Williams

*In 2010, the zombie horror genre gained even greater popularity than the huge following it had previously enjoyed when AMC's The Walking Dead (TWD) first aired. The chapter surveys the archaeology of this fictional post-apocalyptic material world in the show's seasons 1-9, focusing on its mural practices and environments which draw upon ancient, biblical, medieval and colonial motifs. The study identifies the moralities and socialities of wall-building, dividing not only survivors aspiring to re-found civilization from the wilderness and manifesting the distinctive identities of each mural community, but also distinguishing the living from the undead. The roles of the dead and the undead in mural iterations are also explored. As such, dimensions of past and present wall-building practices are reflected and inverted in this fictional world. As part of a broader 'archaeology of The Walking Dead', the chapter identifies the potentials of exploring the show's physical barriers within the context of the public archaeology of frontiers and borderlands.*

Andrea: What's your secret?

The Governor: Really big walls.

Andrea: That soldier had walls too and we all know how that turned out, so.

The Governor: I guess we do. The real secret is what goes on within these walls. It's about getting back to who we were, who we really are, not just waiting to be saved. You know people here have homes, medical care, kids go to school. Adults have jobs to do. It's a sense of purpose. We're a community.

Milton: With a lot of guns and ammunition.

The Governor: It never hurts.

Andrea: And really big walls.

The Governor: And men willing to risk everything to defend them. Compromise our safety, destroy our community: I'll die before I let that happen.

TWD 3:3<sup>1</sup>

## Preamble

*The Walking Dead* (2010–, hereafter *TWD*) televises and expands upon the comic books of Robert Kirkman and Charlie Adlard of the same name. In both the comic books and television series, we follow the journey of survivors in a fictional present-day America fighting to escape the apocalypse caused when, for reasons and in circumstances left mysterious, the undead ('walkers') rise and spread their deadly virus by biting their victims. The living struggle to survive, some attempting to adapt to the new

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: throughout the text, citations to specific episodes are denoted in text by series/season followed by the episode number, in this case, Season 3, Episode 3 is represented as '3:3'.

wilderness of the undead while others choose to build new communities from the ruins of our world. We quickly learn that the walkers are only one of the challenges facing Rick Grimes and his band as they seek refuge and build walled communities; they must contend with the challenge of violent marauders and dystopian communities, many deploying territorial markers and mural practices of their own. In Season 2 we learn a revelation: all those who die, not just those bitten by the undead, ‘turn’ and ‘come back’. Everyone is destined to become the walking dead!

As revealed in the opening quote from Season 3 of the hit television show, The Governor is the sinister and janus-faced leader of the first successful and sustainable walled community encountered: Woodbury. Helped by his sidekick Milton, he explains the significance of the walls to new arrival, Andrea. The Governor perceives that walls alone cannot protect the community. Instead, it is the determination of those within: the community’s people. The walls of Woodbury do not just hold back the undead hordes and potential enemies, they define the community itself as a beacon of civilization in a wild world. Thus, the walls protect a ‘seed’ which he envisages will repopulate the world anew under his leadership.

Andrea is in awe of Woodbury, having spent 8 months in the wild through the winter, saved by her friend Michonne, fighting off the walkers and hiding in temporary refuges. While she remains sceptical, she is seduced by the prospect that Woodbury’s walls offer a sanctuary and a future away from the wild and the walking dead. Unfortunately, the community is not what it first appears: Michonne sees this and leaves, but Andrea remains. Woodbury harbours dark barbaric secrets behind the façade: murder and plunder, experiments on, and the torturing of, the living. Meanwhile, the undead are maltreated: captured for killing as public entertainment. If there was any lingering doubt that The Governor was a truly twisted tyrant, he fails to comprehend that the walkers are no longer living. He keeps his undead daughter locked in a room, combing her hair and singing her songs, imagining she still has not turned. Yet if this might be taken as a ‘human’ side to The Governor, he keeps the heads of his enemies and victims as trophies, floating in fish tanks! The walls of Woodbury are keeping the horror in, not keeping it out!

Unsurprisingly, this ‘seed’ of future civilization is doomed from the start under a dictator who turns upon his own people in his personal drive for revenge against Rick Grimes and Michonne and the desire to acquire their prison walls after he has lost control of his own defended community. In the world of TWD, makeshift and newly constructed walls afford protection against both the living and the walkers, but they cannot save communities from their own internal fault lines. The self-destructive tendencies of people’s personalities, and their communities’ social and moral conflicts, are depicted as the true enemies in this apocalyptic world. Walls and guns are merely the pivots around which these dramas are played out for both good and ill.

## Introduction

Complementing this volume’s contributions on archaeological interactions with fictional frontiers (*Game of Thrones*) and legendary representations of historic frontiers (*Mulan* and *The Great Wall*), this chapter makes a first step towards writing an ‘archaeology of *The Walking Dead*’ by exploring the pervasive mural environments of the AMC hit television show’s fictional material world. This vision of a post-apocalyptic United States focuses on the states of Georgia and Virginia. TWD is less about the horror of the undead and anxieties regarding viral contagions and more a reflection on what it means, in moral, social and ontological terms, to be human and the challenges of being alive, thrown into sharp relief by the apocalypse (Mullins 2013). Here, I focus on how the show reveals Western anxieties and horror regarding both the power and futility – the potential good and the inherent ills – of walls to exclude and include, to define and constitute, communities. Our anxieties are shown as clearly bound up with ruins and abandoned spaces. In this wild landscape, walls offer the promise of security and yet

ultimately often prove to be futile in the face of untold horrors from without, and conflict from within. Meanwhile, others reject walls, embracing the wilderness and become transient, or else they seek safety through isolation or remoteness. As well as offering one vision on US gun culture and violence, and both anti-state self-sufficiency and the needs for communal participation, *TWD* focuses on walls – frontiers and borders, barricades and prisons – as both the mechanisms for creating communities and keeping out living and undead ‘others’, and as the germs of their own self-destruction.

Previous academic research has explored the horror genre and zombies specifically, but archaeological dimensions seem to have received sparse attention. Moreover, while some archaeologists have considered how archaeological themes inspire and pervade horror writing (e.g. Moshenska 2012) and the relationship between the archaeological investigation of ruins and abandoned landscapes and post-apocalyptic fiction, the full extent of the worlds built for television dramas offer rich vistas for further and fresh investigations. Meanwhile, recent work on contemporary walls has yet to venture into their fictional representations (McAttackney and McGuire 2020). To date, archaeologists have only used *TWD* to engage contemporary audiences in past beliefs and practices surrounding revenants and prosthetics (e.g. Mattison 2017; Porck 2017; Killgrove 2018), although Dawid Kobińska insightfully explores the connections between the television show and historical re-enactment (Kobińska 2013). There has also been brief commentaries on the contemporary archaeologies of abandoned places as ‘undead’ landscapes (Frackowiak *et al.* 2014; Williams 2015). Still, the show merits further archaeological attention from multiple perspectives, not only because *TWD* is so popular that archaeologists of our contemporary world need to be aware of its apocalyptic representations of material culture, landscape and society, but also because it offers an engaging perspective on our own world and anxieties regarding its demise. It is also fascinating because zombie horror, in different but striking fashions akin to vampire and mummy horror, explicitly draws upon Western imaginings about human past and human mortality (see also Kobińska 2013). In *TWD*, this relates directly to perceptions of walled communities which bear allusions to the ancient Mediterranean (Alexandria), the European Middle Ages (The Saviours; The Kingdom), and from America’s colonial and frontier pasts (Hilltop). Together, these constitute varied vistas upon what constitutes a ‘civilization’ versus the ‘wild’ and its various occupants: barbarians in their own walled communities (e.g. The Scavengers), itinerants (The Claimers), outright marauders and ‘savages’ (The Wolves and The Whisperers) and, of course, the hordes of walkers whom have taken over our world and whom everyone becomes upon death. Moreover, themes of Christian heritage connect together multiple walled spaces in the show, from the uncanny rhetoric of The Sanctuary and biblical quotes upon the walls throughout The Kingdom, to the Baptist church of Season 2, St Sarah’s church as an uncanny fortified space in Season 5 (5:8), and the church burned and rebuilt in Alexandria through to Season 9.

This chapter explores the mural dimensions and environments of *TWD* by extending the discussions of the mortuary archaeology presented in 42 *Archaeodeath* blog-posts composed from 2017 to 2020 which chart the material cultures, monuments and landscapes from Season 1 to Season 9 (2010–2019).<sup>2</sup> While I recognise that many of the storylines, characters and environments are inspired by the comic books, my focus here is exclusively upon the television show, in which the scope of mural environments are enhanced considerably and visualised in greater detail than the comic books (Williams 2017a). The ‘archaeology’ of *TWD* promises to shed light on the detailed and rich fascination with zombies in popular culture (Williams 2018a: 5–6), but perhaps could help to foster a sustained dialogue between academics and the public regarding the materialities of fictional past worlds and imagined landscapes in which horrific and uncanny inversions of the contemporary world are exhibited. Therefore, here I offer an archaeology of fictional futures and their frontiers, and what they reveal about attitudes towards walls in the human past and present as well as potentially affording a fruitful avenue in public engagement and education for the public archaeology of frontiers and borderlands.

<sup>2</sup> <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/category/archaeodeath-on-tv-film-and-video-games/the-walking-dead/>

## A landscape of wrecks and ruins

Waking up in a hospital bed recovering from gunshot wounds sustained in the line of duty as a Georgia state police officer, Rick Grimes discovers the hospital is abandoned. This hitherto safe and secure facility of healing is blown apart. In a later flashback scene, we learn that the army have killed doctors and nurses who have in turn been killed by the undead. Rick discovers that his ward is riddled with bullet holes, evidence of the slaying of the living and walkers. He encounters a female corpse, and then the double doors of the cafeteria barred and padlocked, daubed with the words: 'DON'T OPEN, DEAD INSIDE'. Escaping via the stairwell, he encounters lines of corpses outside, a snapshot of the failed emergency efforts. No one is left alive.

From the show's very start, we are shown the promise of security and implicit futility of walls and fences in the face of the walking dead. From this moment on, Rick and those he encounters stagger from temporary refuge to temporary refuge, from Freddy and Cindy Drake's house where Morgan and Duane Jones take Rick to let him recover, via a police station, office blocks, houses, flats, farms, factories, warehouses, shops and military and government installations. They all share the same physical limitations: they can be traps for both the living and the undead, and their walls and doors only provide temporary and precarious protection from the hordes of the undead and living marauders who might be attracted by the sight, sound, smell and movements of the living within.

Thus, as we follow Rick's group's adventures, first in search of his family and then seeking survival and security, we are simultaneously shown the ruins of our world, but also a host of scenarios, some only dimly explained, where the living have turned on each other and their communities and/or survival plans have failed. Before we turn to the exceptions, let us chart, archaeologically, this 'wild' American landscape. Architectures – houses and flats – are shown to be the coffins of their residents repeatedly (e.g. 1:1; 3:1), as when The Governor encounters the terminally ill David Chambler, his daughters Lilly and Tara and granddaughter Meghan in a flat, sustained by food supplies from a truck outside, temporarily safe but ultimately doomed to Chambler's terminal illness requiring a regular supply of oxygen, and to starvation (4:6). Other failed refuges include farms, as when Martinez's group encounter a cabin where the men have been killed and beheaded by the women, accused of murder, lies and rape, but who themselves have perished from suicide or starvation. In one harrowing scene, an insane hermit is encountered living in a cabin with the corpse of his dead dog; Michonne kills him to prevent him letting in walkers attracted to his cries (3:7). Another instance is a boat on the lake previously defended by Leslie William Starton: Aaron and Rick encounter it surrounded by walkers in the water, presumably (in part) potential bandits Starton killed before either being killed himself or taking his own life (7:7–7:8). Even abandoned walled communities (see below) contain the undead traces of their demise (9:9). Interpersonal violence, suicide and starvation are the surmised causes of death. Other failed refuges include a church (2:1), schools (e.g. 2:2–3; 5:3), a golf club house (4:12), a compound (2:10) and an amusement park (7:12). The same applies inside cities and towns where failed refuges include a woman's shelter, a covered walkway between office blocks (5:6) and inside the foyer of a museum (9:1).

Without the protection of walls, individuals and groups are exposed to attacks from the undead and from other groups of survivors. The Governor, in a raid to take supplies, slays an entire other group in the woods who were protected only by barbed wire (4:7). Then, once he has taken over Martinez's group, he exploits undead attacks on their poorly defended compound to justify taking over the Prison held by Rick's group (4:8–4:9). Characters relay how similar disasters have affected themselves, such as when Lt Welles reports to The Governor at Woodbury about the panic and decimation of an Army camp 'in a few hours' (3:2) and through the backstories of Michonne (4:9) and Alpha (9:10) in which secure locations are overrun. Similarly, we encounter the repeated struggles of Rick's group on the road, moving from place-to-place, desperate to find somewhere to stay while Laurie (Rick's wife) is

pregnant (3:1). Likewise, Andrea and Michonne endure an itinerant life before they reach Woodbury (3:1, 3:5). Occasionally, temporary refuges prove safe and secure with provisions, but only for a while, as with the funeral home encountered by Beth and Daryl (5:13). Even as groups, seemingly secure places offering sustainable destinations prove unviable for different reasons, from the quarry outside Atlanta which proved temporarily secure because it was isolated (1:2–1:5), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) where the single survivor, Dr Jenner, sets the facility to self-destruct (1:6), and Hershel's Farm (2:2–2:13) which, while fenced and remote, is under threat of discovery from groups of scavengers and the roaming undead: it is finally destroyed and abandoned when a herd of walkers are attracted by gunfire.

In terms of communities, the only one we encounter that is able to survive by deliberately exploiting topography and remoteness rather than by walls is the all-female settlement at Oceanside. Traumatized by the retribution of The Saviours who had slain all their community's men, they retreated and concealed themselves by the coast, killing all whom they encounter to preserve their settlement's secret (7:6). Even here, they are vulnerable to walkers washed up by the ocean itself and they inevitably cannot escape or ignore the wider world.

In rare cases isolated farmsteads are identified as havens for exceptional individuals and in exceptional circumstances. Hence, Morgan meets Dr E. Eastman who has survived alone in a cabin in the woods with limited defences and sustained by vegetables and a single goat's milk. This man has independent survival skills and has endured because of his cabin's remoteness as well as his ingenuity and determination forged through loss and having witnessed the worst of humanity before the apocalypse (6:4). He is only endangered by Morgan's presence and he perishes whilst saving Morgan from a walker. Likewise, Carol, an independent fighter who has endured abuse, loss and hardship aplenty before and during the apocalypse, decides to live outside The Kingdom in an isolated roadside house which, with its family burial ground, is enclosed by defensible iron railings (7:1, 7:2). A far more sinister self-isolator is Father Gabriel (5:2), whom we learn barred his church, St Sarah's, against his own congregation and refused to open it even when he heard them plead for his help and curse his name as they were torn apart by the undead. Later, St Sarah's takes on further roles: it is deployed by Rick's group as an effective trap for the Terminus cannibals (5:3) and is temporarily fortified against the undead with spikes (5:8).

### **Embracing the wild**

Not everyone embraces walls in the post-apocalyptic landscape, however. With the exception of foraging expeditions to find resources (as per Jesus for Hilltop) or to recruit new members for settled communities (as per Aaron and others for Alexandria), itinerancy is usually portrayed as a temporary solution which is ultimately self-destructive. The entirety of Season 4 is 'on the road': the disparate groups of survivors left following The Governor's attack on the Prison seeking a new place to stay. Living alone or in small groups, as transients, is repeatedly shown to be an unsustainable strategy, such as for the corpse of an unnamed man who is found by Rick's group having committed suicide in his tent (2:1), a Mexican family on the road encountered by Daryl and Merle (3:10), the unnamed isolated male with an orange backpack whom Rick refuses to pick up (3:12), Sam and Ana who have somehow survived foraging despite Ana having a lame foot (4:4) or Bob Stookey, an alcoholic loner, who wanders alone before he joins Rick's group at the Prison (4:13). The worst instance is the traumatized, starving and insane woman encountered in the woods by Rick (4:1); she tries to kill Rick to feed him to the animated head of her deceased husband which she keeps in a bag and imagines is still alive and to whom she still owes a debt as well as love. The wild comprising abandoned settlements, agricultural land and woodlands is equated with a slow death, craven behaviour and madness: itinerants are the walking dead.



Living in isolation in the wild is also connected to mourning, chosen by Michonne after losing her family and Morgan after losing Duane. Both live alone, combating the undead alongside their own trauma and loss. Michonne leads two chained walkers with their arms and jaws removed so they cannot bite but whose proximity to her protects her against the other undead (3:1). She temporarily reverts to this life after the breaching and destruction of the Prison (4:9). She joins a group of walkers who do not even notice she is alive, which finally shocks her back to the world of the living (4:9). Meanwhile Morgan creates makeshift painted warning signs ('turn around and live') and arrays of spikes and tripwire traps, marking out territory he has made 'clear' of the undead (3:12). Siddiq is the third example of a person sustained by his Muslim faith and wits in equal measure, but, as with Morgan and Michonne, he must eventually join the Alexandria community to survive (8:6). Another rare example of an effective lone survivalist is encountered by Aaron and Daryl who hope to make contact in order to recruit him to join Alexandria but he is captured and killed by The Wolves (5:16). The message is clear via this exception which proves the rule: you might be able to survive against walkers and in the wilderness, but other living people are still a threat! Only Daryl is shown living long-term in the wilderness in a sustainable fashion and again. As for Michonne and Morgan, this is related to mourning; Daryl lives alone camping in the open after Rick's apparent death, initially in order to keep looking for his corpse without success (9:6–9:7).

There are seven groups we encounter who embrace an itinerant mode of existence: behaving as post-apocalyptic hunter-gatherers. Each embodies perverse stereotypes of (pre)historic lifeways. The Highwaymen are post-apocalyptic cowboys, riding horses and the leader wearing a cowboy hat, another wearing a Civil War Union soldier's jacket (9:13). These are the only group who become 'good guys': having attempted to extort tribute they strike a deal with King Ezekiel and Queen Carol to protect the roads between Hilltop and The Kingdom. Then, we have the 'bad guys'. In Season 2, we encounter a roving group of murderers and rapists intent on finding Hershel's Farm (2:8–2:9). Next, we have The Claimers, who have a simple and inevitably self-destructive rule that each man (and they are only men) can claim all they encounter by simply uttering 'claimed' (4:13, 4:15–16). Jed's group of ex-Saviours attempt to live as bandits in the wild, a strategy that ultimately fails when they encounter Carol (9:6). Jocelyn leads a group of parentless children who are depicted as just like other pack of rovers living in the wilderness, kidnapping other children to join their ranks; Michonne must fight them to retrieve Judith (9:14).

Two further groups go far beyond these bands of rovers. In different ways, they embrace the wilderness and revert to animalistic 'savagery' in different regards. Morgan and then the Alexandria community encounter The Wolves. This group have embraced the choice of being bandits in the face of the apocalypse and while we never seen how and where they live, we anticipate they have no fixed abode. In addition, however, they have concocted a philosophy that likens them to a pack of hunting wolves who have returned to reclaim the landscape from human settlers. Hence, they kill and deliberately turn the living into the undead, marking them with a 'W' on their foreheads. These 'savages' seem to be responsible for destroying Noah's family's walled community in Virginia (5:9) as well as attempting to breach and plunder Alexandria, slaying all whom they encounter (6:2). Most horrific of all, they exploit fences and walls in a perverse manner, creating traps for wandering survivors (5:16).

While we might see the Wolves as conjuring a contrived justification for their actions as a re-wilding of America, equating themselves with marauding pack animals (5:16), The Whisperers embrace this mindset further still. They seek to eschew human social structures, operating instead as pack animals. They thus have denounced individual names, living in camps, droving the herds of the undead. Their aim is to accept and blend into the post-human world of the walkers. To do this, they gather and fashion flesh masks to conceal their identity and walk and move like the undead, using guttural whispers to communicate (9:7). Their sense of identity is portrayed as 'primitive' and Alpha defies her leadership by reputation and summary violence. Their pack-animal behaviour is extended to a strong sense of territory as they roam. Conflict with Alexandria and then Hilltop and The Kingdom starts when unwittingly Rosita and Eugene infringe on The Whisperers'

territory. In retribution for the incursions and subsequent conflict, Alpha, leader of the Whisperers, kidnaps and beheads individuals from each community, lining their heads on stakes along a grassy ridge top to mark the border of the Whisperers' territory (9:15). This practice has clear resonances with early medieval judicial practices and, rather than walls per se, it evokes a 'barbaric' attitude towards territoriality and trophies as deterrents (Williams 2020). Indeed, it is the only territorial 'linear monument' created in the world of *TWD* as opposed to the settled communities who only attempt to defend fixed walled communities. Rather than a defensible barrier, it is a threat and deterrent aimed at others.

Therefore, despite rare exceptions, repeatedly we encounter those with walls but alone or in small groups consigned to a slower but inevitable transient doom. The walls become prisons and eventually coffins if one does not move on. Roaming people are doomed too unless they join with settled, walled communities. Meanwhile, those without walls or with flimsy defences perish also, bar those rare instances of independent survivalists and those able to find the most remote locations (in the unique instance of Oceanside) and defend the wilderness itself against potential threats. The most horrific dimensions of the wilderness, however, are those who give themselves over fully to it, The Wolves and The Whisperers, who turn their back on walled communities and any trappings of civilization whatsoever, perceiving them as destined to fail. For these groups, the undead themselves offer salvation in the post-apocalyptic world, and yet territory matters in defining their post-human communities against those who wish to retain vestiges of pre-apocalypse humanity.

### **'Bad' walled communities**

In contrast to those in the wild, the world of *TWD* juxtaposes a host of walled communities which can be readily divided between 'good-guys' whose communities, while perhaps flawed and sometimes ultimately failing, attempt to defend and sustain civilization, and 'bad walls' which defend and harbour dystopian and despotic groups. These walled communities together constitute the principal survivors of *The Walking Dead*. Before we analyse their detail, it is worth highlighting how these communities all share ideals demanded from television audiences which contrast sharply with our contemporary world. For while organised very differently, they are all mixed-age, mixed-gender and almost all are mixed-ethnicity, and seemingly they cut across real-world class boundaries too. Vicious despots like Negan claim to be blind to issues of race. However, within this shared dislocation of contemporary world divisions, equality is a mirage and democracy a thing of the past. Instead, they are all organised around charismatic leaders of different qualities and characters. Hence, they are all 'returns' to a fictional frontier.

There are five principal dystopian walled communities encountered in seasons 1–9 (Figure 1). First, we encounter the aforementioned seductive Woodbury in Season 3: an historic high street of a small Georgia town which has been barricaded at either ends with trailers and buses augmented with tyres and metal strips, with one makeshift pair of doors. Together with the buildings themselves – windows blocked – they encircle a community that, superficially, appears to perpetuate civic values under the charismatic and determined leadership of The Governor. Rapidly we realise that The Governor is a murdering marauder and despot who leads his people to war against Rick's group and loses both Woodbury and his community as a result. The undead are being captured for entertainment and (later) as weapons against The Prison. The landscape of Woodbury is schizoid – the leafy high street seemingly an island of calm and civility is contrasted with the back-street warehouses where the undead are stored, where gladiatorial combats with the undead are played out and where The Governor tortures his victims. It is important to note that Woodbury's defences are far from secure: Rick effectively raided Woodbury to rescue Glenn and Maggie (3:7–3:8) and even walkers sneak in when the walls are not being watched (3:9). This is because, whilst seemingly outward looking and robust, Woodbury's defences are dysfunctionally shown repeatedly as being used to keep people in and controlling who leaves (3:5, 3:9).



Figure 1: Five 'bad' walled communities in *The Walking Dead* seasons 1–9. Clockwise: Woodbury (The Governor's community), Terminus (Gareth's cannibals), Grady Memorial Hospital (Officer Lerner's community), The Sanctuary (The Saviours) and The Junkyard (the Scavengers)

The second walled dystopia encountered is Terminus (4:16; 5:1), established in line-side warehouses adjacent to a railway marshalling yard, and thus situated at a key node in the landscape. The walls of this community are merely the compound fences and these are left unlocked. We learn they can be locked and flares are set to disperse walkers and yet most often they are left open to afford the impression of an inviting community to those who have followed signs along the railway tracks promising that 'those who arrive survive'. A barbecue is ready to welcome newcomers. In uncanny fashions akin to a concentration camp, the visitors are deceived and manipulated regarding their fate if they enter the unguarded compound (Williams 2017c). In reality, Terminus is a trap and the brutalised inhabitants have legitimised their cannibalism, giving newcomers the 'choice' of joining their ranks or becoming the next meal. Hence, the walls are horrific and barbaric, laced with lies: both a defence against the undead and a trap for the unwary.

The third dystopian mural community is the Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta run by former police officers led by Officer Dawn Lerner and a complicit Dr Edwards. Secure in their multi-storey eyrie rather than newly built walls, they treat the community as slaves 'for the greater good' of maintaining law and order. As with Woodbury and Terminus, the superficially fair and ordered community is deeply sinister.



The cops enforce and abuse their power and justify maltreatment and injustice over hospital staff in a strict regime (5:4, 5:7, 5:8). The hospital is effectively a prison, inescapable without the sanction of the former police officers. Those that try to escape are brought back to continue their servitude.

Our fourth dystopia is The Saviours. Again, we encounter a charismatic leader convinced of his righteousness: Negan. The Saviours are not the entire community, but the 'warband'. The Saviours operate a 'defence in depth' approach unique in the world of *TWD*. A network of defended outposts extract tribute and supply the headquarters: a converted factory called The Sanctuary. The outposts are of all adapted structures, from a school and residential flats to warehouses and a radar station (6:12): they share an austerity and a lack of sense that they are anything other than utilitarian, ancillary, defensible posts (8:2–8:4). They portray themselves as akin to a medieval knightly retinue protecting their citizens. They control the landscape: a further aspect of their scale and mobilisation is the use of barricades to block and intimidate Rick's group and prevent them getting to Hilltop (6:16). Both the permanent walls of The Sanctuary and the outposts, and these temporary devices, are together concerted efforts to construct a landscape of control, surveillance, fear and intimidation. In reality, they are little more than an extortion racket fuelling servitude for the many. Vicious punishments are meted out to law breakers overseen by Negan himself. Negan insists on loyalty through a cult of personality and knee-bending deference. He extracts labour, allegiance and enjoys relative wealth and comfort as well as a harem of women. His captains and followers are given preferential treatment in exchange for their loyalty including, food, drink, entertainment and access to sex. Negan has acquired a quasi-religious persona alongside his royal airs: wielding Lucille (a barbed-wire covered baseball bat) like a sceptre of office. In short, we are looking upon a post-apocalyptic equivalent of an early medieval warlord with martial roles mashed up with a charismatic cult leader affording salvation and a charming yet vicious concentration camp commandant.

The materiality of the walls of The Sanctuary and their outputs are deeply uncanny since they are merely repurposed fences. It is instead via The Saviour's numbers, violence and intimidation and their network of outposts that makes them secure until threatened by the combined forces of Alexandria, Hilltop and The Kingdom. Yet the fences are rendered a fearful prospect because they are augmented with an animated deterrent: the bodies of the undead creating a minefield of spiked and staked animated corpses of those who failed to maintain Negan's rules or those who tried to escape (7:3). Ironically, this strategy is deployed against them: walkers are used by Rick to block in Negan and his captains to besiege the Sanctuary and dislocate it from its outposts (8:1). The parasitic nature of the Sanctuary is revealed through the siege, but also after Negan's defeat: despite the best efforts to maintain the place in the peace and alliance that follows, the Sanctuary fails and its survivors revert to scavenging (9:1).

These four walled communities share similarities in their promises of security, abuse of power, a strict hierarchy, and uncanny subversion of Western moral and social values whilst purporting to uphold them. They also share in abusing the undead as well as the living, a point to which we shall return. The fifth and final dystopia is more ambiguous and it is different from all of these: the Junkyard of the Scavengers (7:9). With their unusual speech pattern, joyless expressions, drab clothes and hair, they have crafted the first post-apocalyptic community that lives fully sedentary and scavenging, literally creating a life out of the rubbish of our civilization. In some ways, they are sedentary versions of The Whisperers, creating a post-human world amidst junk, rather than attempting to hold onto aspects of the human past. They have crafted a bespoke gated community from the anatomy of the Junkyard escaping from the wilderness and the undead, as well as concealed from other communities. Hidden within the wider Junkyard we gain a sense they have a labyrinth of streets, solar power (7:10) and they live in adapted containers with clean possessions and sleeping quarters, contrasting with outward appearances (8:14).

Like The Saviours, their sinister side is embodied in how they harness the undead to their needs, deploying Winslow, one of their former members, as an instrument of gladiatorial-style killing (7:9, see also 8:7).

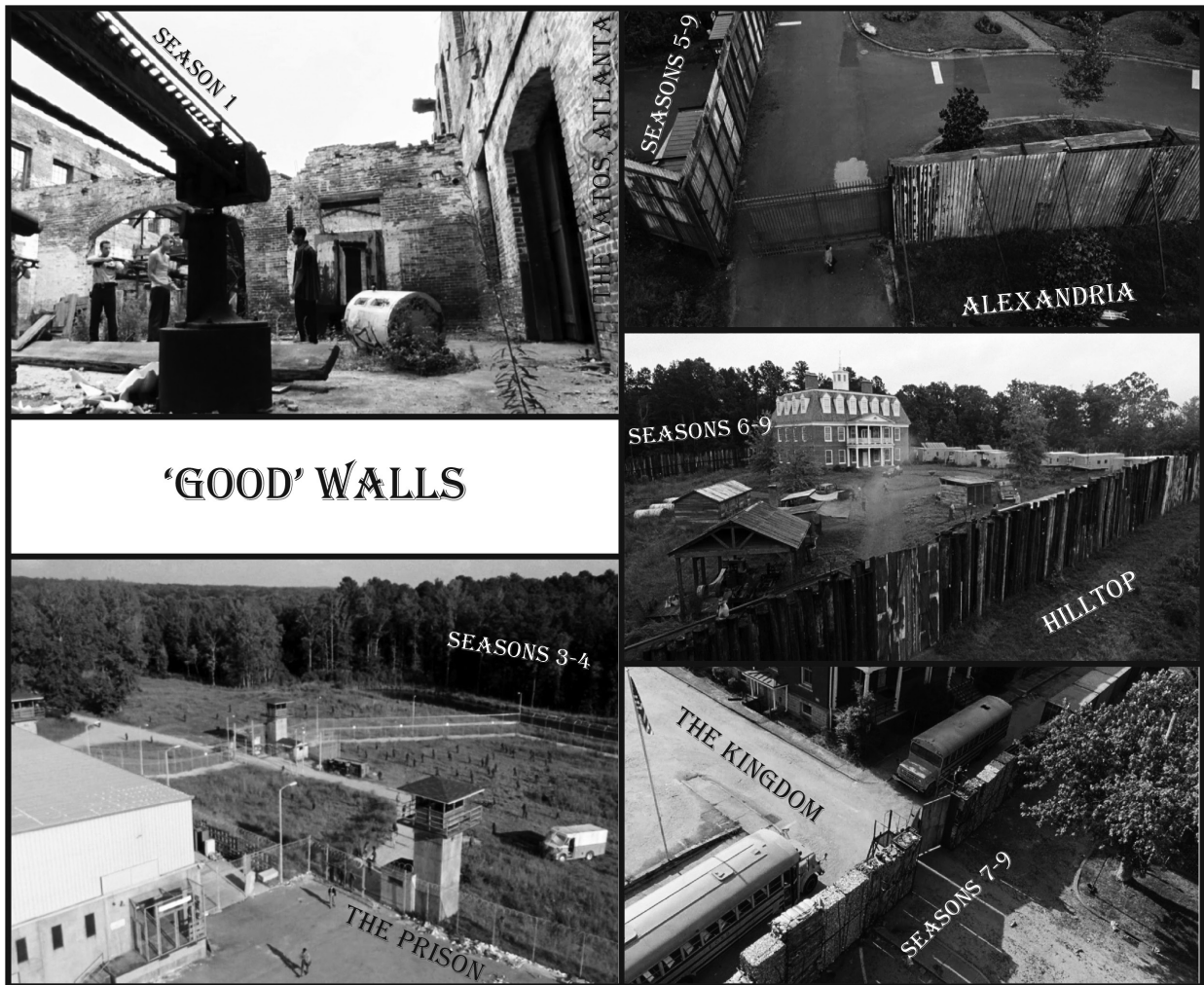


Figure 2: Five ‘good’ walled communities in *The Walking Dead* seasons 1–9. Clockwise: The Vatos in Atlanta, Alexandria, Hilltop, Kingdom and the Prison (West Georgia Correctional Facility)

What is particularly intriguing is that The Scavengers, via their leader Jadis, possess a taste for fine art (8:6). With rubbish, they create community, defences but also new aesthetics! Most intriguing, they are in contact with an as-yet unnamed other group who have access to high-technology, medical care and helicopters. Of all the communities I have crudely categorised here as ‘Bad Walls’, The Scavenger’s Junkyard is most ambiguous: having seemingly rejected our society, they are best-placed to endure and flourish away from the undead and the living communities seeking to retain ties to past social formations. They exercise contemporary archaeology; creating a community amidst discard. Sadly, The Scavengers misjudge their relations and conduct one too many double-crosses. As a result, they are slaughtered by The Saviours, victims to those more brutal than themselves (8:10).

### ‘Good’ walled communities

Walls are not all bad, however. They can also offer security and hope in response to the apocalypse. The unquestionably dystopian walled communities in which walls conceal, deceive, contain, control and exclude in different interleaving measures can be contrasted with those walled communities that the world of *TWD* holds up as potential custodians of civilization. None are without flaws and ambiguities,

yet together they might be regarded as aspiring utopias rising from the ashes of the apocalypse. Completing the five 'bad walls', I identify five principal 'good walls' communities (Figure 2).

The first example we encounter is deceptive by design. Exploring Atlanta, Rick's group comes into conflict with what at first seem to be a gang. Yet it transpires The Vatos are protecting an old people's home, their urban sedentism conditioned by the inability of the elderly to move. It is also the only community that comes close to having a defined ethnic identity, largely but not exclusively comprised of Atlanta's Hispanic community (1:3–1.4). The Vatos gang scavenge and defend the old people, having barred the windows and welded all doors bar one, using a deceptive 'front door' through a ruined factory to conceal the character and location of those they defend. Led by the former custodian of the nursing home, Guillermo, we never learn of their fate after Rick's group leave on amicable terms.<sup>3</sup>

I do not regard Hershel's Farm (Season 2) as a walled community, even if at first it appears a safe, almost idyllic, rural retreat. This is because, while fenced, it survives unscathed mainly through remoteness. Likewise, for simplicity, I will not count Morgan's barricades since he is defending only himself in a dystopian and self-destructive fashion (3:12). For our second 'good' community we must wait until Rick's group discover the West Georgia Correctional Facility (the Prison). It must be claimed by removing the undead occupants, and this is followed by conflict with surviving prison inmates. Even when taken, it is only one cell block and part of the compound which is safe and cleared: the undead rule the rest of the complex. Indeed, it is never a fully secure and sustained perimeter (3:4) and is readily breached by The Governor (3:10) who enters and is defeated by the undead within 'the tombs' rather than by Rick's group (3:16). Hence, while aspiring to be a 'good' walled community, the Prison is shown as a temporary, permeable, vulnerable and ultimately futile environment. This is further manifest in the opportunities the fences afford for long-term interaction with the undead through these fences, the children start to give them nicknames and somehow a virus borne by the undead spreads to the living within the Prison walls (4:1). The Prison is finally breached and destroyed by The Governor with the help of a new band of survivors who possess a tank. However, no one survives to claim it, with the undead pouring in attracted by the fire fight (4:8). Still, while the Prison community lasted, it promised to be the future. Crops were grown, the dead were buried by its walls (Williams 2017b), and an attempt was made to create a community there.

Following the failure and destruction of the Prison, Rick's group is scattered until they finally encounter Alexandria. St Sarah's church offers one temporary stronghold which, while harbouring a dark backstory, offer temporary positive reprieve (5:2). Meanwhile, Noah's family's walled community is a further example of 'good walls' (5:9) but it is only encountered once overrun. Unlike the failed project of the Prison, destroyed by the Governor's retribution rather than the undead, Alexandria was devised and is founded on idealistic and proto-democratic principles. Founded by a US congresswoman Deanna Monroe and her husband Reg in a part-complete eco-friendly self-containing housing estate, Alexandria is the sanctuary Rick's group have been seeking for ever since they left the Prison (5:11).

Yet almost immediately, Alexandria's walls are a focus of tension and anxiety. For while no one is forced to remain within, multiple characters cannot cope with being disconnected from the wider world. These include the Alexandrian traumatised teenager, Enid, who has never become fully accustomed to living in a settled community after the death of her family beyond the walls, Rick's son Carl, Michonne and Daryl. Conversely, there grows the fear that those within have not experienced the horrors and hardships of the outside world, and are therefore out of touch and ill-equipped to respond to its dangers (5: 13). A further twist is that Alexandria harbours and indulges criminals who should be expelled; Rick is prevented from doing so with disastrous consequences in the form of Reg's slaying (5:15–5:16). The name 'Alexandria' was designed to

<sup>3</sup> In a deleted scene from 2:1, the Vatos gang and the old people were executed by unknown assailants: [https://walkingdead.fandom.com/wiki/Guillermo\\_\(TV\\_Series\)](https://walkingdead.fandom.com/wiki/Guillermo_(TV_Series))



promote a sense of pastness and luxury, but inevitably it garners further post-apocalyptic associations with its famed ancient library and the concept of the community as the fragile custodian of civilization.

The design and material composition of its walls embody Alexandria's strengths and its flaws. Bespoke and newly constructed, they were created from construction materials gathered from the building site of the luxury self-contained development, abandoned when the apocalypse struck. The walls are made of robust steel girders with sturdy supports. However, it is evident that Reg Monroe who designed the wall had created defences that were robust but naïve in their design and placement. This is because they were built primarily to defend against herds of the undead, against whom they hold fast until breached by the falling church tower (and indeed under Rick's leadership the Alexandria community also create temporary barricades against herds of walkers that would have effectively redirected them were it not for The Wolves' attack: 6:1). However, Alexandria's walls are ineffectual against living attackers who can easily scale the struts (6:2). As with all the communities, the wall lacks external ditches. Also, there are no watch towers, wall walk, or even lines of sight (the main gate is positioned on a blind corner). Only the church tower offers a rudimentary lookout point and this is left *outside* the defences. Moreover, when the church tower collapses, it spells the (temporary) doom of the community when it is surrounded by a herd of walkers (6:7–6:8). The walls of Alexandria thus offer security, but they are equally a folly scaled first by The Wolves and later approached and overrun by The Saviours on multiple occasions (8:8). Still, the walls have other functions: they garner mortuary and memorial dimensions of community definition (Williams 2017d and e; see below).

It then becomes clear that Rick's group's world is going to get much bigger. Having met Jesus (Paul) they encounter Hilltop, a small peaceful defended community run by the ineffectual Gregory. While the name of Alexandria evokes a neoclassical revival, Hilltop is a tangible link to the colonial past, both in its physical structure and its entitled and incompetent leader (6:11). The hill is defended by a corrugated iron gate, a timber palisade with wall walk either side of the gate, all drawn from the materials yard of a power company. Jesus explains that the great house within the enclosure was called Barrington House. It was a wealthy private residence gifted to the State in the 1930s and subsequently a living history museum visited by schools from over a 50-mile radius. Jesus suspects people were drawn to this historic landmark following the rationale that it might stay running once the modern world has broken down (see also Williams 2017f). Jesus also explains that the house's windows allow them to see for miles in every direction affording it a location with historical gravitas but also ideal for defence. The colonial landscape aesthetic therefore takes on a defensive role following the apocalypse. Yet, Hilltop's walls prove only superficially effective against concerted attack. As with Alexandria, no one thinks to build a ditch and other defences beyond the wall and the treeline obscures the required vistas to see approaching enemies. Hence, Hilltop's walls are breached on two occasions by The Saviours, first to send a message (7:5) and then in an outright attack with weapons tainted with walker blood when Barrington House itself becomes the last line of defence (8:13). Still, the wall does serve as a deterrant and refuge during the first encounter with The Whisperers (9:10–9:11). The wall acquires further functions beyond defence: a prison is built up against them to house the prisoners captured when The Saviours' outputs were taken (8:6). Moreover, The Saviours are instructed to bury their dead separate from the Hilltop community, outside the walls (Williams 2018b): thus the walls define the community in life and in death.

While the locations, architectures and names of Alexandria and Hilltop allude to neoclassical and colonial pasts, the next community encountered, The Kingdom, possesses neo-medieval dimensions (7:1). Situated amidst the buildings of a town or suburb, it resembles Woodbury. Yet rather than perpetuating the past, it has been crafted with feudal dimensions, as well as biblical pretensions. Guarded by armoured horse-riding 'knights', it is led by 'The King' and his tiger (King Ezekiel: a former zoo keeper and amateur dramatist). Comprised of freight liners and compacted recycled metal and cans the walls resemble a moderately advanced version of Woodbury's but not quite as bespoke as Hilltop's or Alexandria's. Again,



however, there are no watch towers or ditches or other installations to enhance their capability in defence against the living as well as the undead. The Kingdoms' mixed biblical and feudal dimensions are also manifest in its final abandonment in winter conditions; the community perform an exodus to Alexandria and necessity forces them to encroach upon the territory of The Whisperers, walking past the stakes upon which they had displayed heads to define their terrain.

### Dividing with the dead

Archaeologists have long explored the role of mortuary practice in defining senses of place and community (Williams 2006; Howell this volume). A repeated theme in the landscapes of *TWD* is the use of both the dead and walkers as symbolic and social components of walled communities.

The 'bad' walled communities and 'wild' groups share in their misuse of the undead for entertainment and as weapons (Woodbury; The Scavengers, The Whisperers), as traps (The Wolves) and as defences (The Saviours). Furthermore, two dystopian communities incorporate the dead into defining their identities and defending their perimeters. In Grady Memorial Hospital, the division with the outside is also marked by the dead, in this case vertically: those who die are summarily disposed of down a lift shaft to be eaten by walkers below (5:4). Meanwhile, although not on their perimeter, the Terminus community adapt a warehouse as a shrine with candles and offerings and their names are daubed on the floor. In this instance, honouring those killed by former attackers who were trusted and invited in are used to solidify a sense of community against newcomers (Williams 2017c). Here specifically, commemorative practices are deployed to legitimise the group's cannibalism. Meanwhile, The Saviours tie up the undead as road barricades and fix them on their perimeters of The Sanctuary: using walkers as borders!

The 'good' settled walled communities also articulate their mural practices and identities through the disposal of the dead. At the quarry in Season 1, Hershel's Farm in Season 2, and the West Georgia Correctional Facility, grave-digging, inhumation burial and grave-markers are afforded to named loved ones who die. The makeshift cemeteries are in each case by the perimeters of the lived space, thus constituting places of remembrance and even dialogues with the dead (Williams 2017a and b). In contrast, the anonymous undead are cremated separately, usually outside the settled area: consigned to the wild. The named, loved ones are differentiated by both spatial location and disposal method. This distinction is always materialised at Alexandria where the cemetery is placed beside the walls, and the inner face of the perimeter wall itself becomes a memorial space to commemorate those lost whilst trying to save the community under the legend 'In our Memory' (Williams 2017d). In contrast, the anonymous walkers are buried outside (5:16). Hilltop, not only are the inhabitants cremated near the external perimeter, but the graves of Abraham and Glenn comprise the focus of resistance to The Saviours, while the dead of the captive Saviours are interred outside the walls (7:5; Williams 2017g). In the world of *TWD*, therefore, walls are more than physical markers of division between the wild and the community, but liminal spaces enforced with the bodies and memorials to the dead and, in some cases, with the bodies of the undead.

### Conclusion

Having conducted a 'walk-over' survey of *The Walking Dead*, exploring the mural environments and walled communities of seasons 1–9, I have built up one archaeological perspective on the post-apocalyptic landscapes of the show. Other approaches can and should be attempted in future research, looking not only at the mortuary practices and memorials (Williams 2017a) but also at the abandoned spaces, uses of material culture and landscape, and perhaps also the archaeological dimensions of the undead

themselves as an abject corporeality akin to mummies and bog bodies surviving unnervingly from the human past (Sanders 2009). The markers, barricades, fences and walls – around refuges, communities and (in one case at least) territories – feature predominantly in the backdrop and storylines in which factories, warehouses, quarries, rubbish tips, cities, towns, villages and farms become places of exclusion and inclusion in new fashions following the collapse of civilization and in the face of the walking dead.

As well as reflecting repeatedly on how one's personal and communal humanity are defined by how one treats the living, the dead and even the undead, *TWD* represents a world in which people trust and invest in walls to define and exclude their makeshift communities, while those who live without walls in the wilderness perish or turn 'savage'. As such, I contend *TWD* not only presents us with a frontier world of transient groups enduring martial cultures, mural materialities and strained moralities. Furthermore, the show focuses repeatedly on the obsession with, seduction of, anxieties over, and ultimate failure of, fences and barriers to define the living from the undead, but also the living from other survivors. As such, the mural practices and environments of the show are uncanny subversions and inversions of our world, and distorted reflections of it. Moreover, the distinctive communities and characters and enclosed spaces are manifest in their distinctive material compositions of their walls, both for dystopian 'bad' communities and those that aspire to be utopian. Cross-cutting 'bad' and 'good' walls, mural identities are a mixed pastiche of different kinds of pastness: returning not to a single fixed point in time, but to an imagined frontier world against 'the wild' taking elements from a host of time periods. Indeed, this is a common theme in horror and science fiction writing. Yet the show, and its characters are never explicit or discursive about where this past derives, with hints of biblical, ancient, medieval, colonial and modern authoritarian uses of walls deployed in the construction of different types of egalitarian and hierarchical social formations. In each instance, walls and compounds which are adapted, walls created from reused materials, and walls crafted from garbage, embody a return to the past and the aspiration to create new, competing futures by different groups. Those without substantial walls, with the exception of Oceanside, are considered 'lost' in the wild and lost in time, unable to move past the chaos and catastrophe of the walking dead.

There is now an established field of research exploring archaeological periods and subjects in and as popular culture, including exploring both the material cultures and archaeological practices represented in fictional and virtual environments (Russell 2002; Holtorf 2005; Parker 2009; Reinhard 2018). Yet the horror genre has received limited archaeological attention to date (but see Brophy 2012; Moshenska 2012), and in regards to film and television, with most discussions of archaeology relating to specific pasts, such as the Middle Ages with little consideration of how post-apocalyptic futures are crafted around archaeological themes and media (e.g. Schablitsky 2007; Hall 2009, Elliott 2018; but see Hall 2020). Yet, this short chapter has illustrated how archaeological themes pervade *TWD*, fixated on the relationships between the living, the dead and the undead, mediated in large part through walls of all sorts: makeshift barricades and both repurposed and newly created walled communities. Archaeologists exploring the public archaeology of frontiers and borderlands are better informed and equipped to engage contemporary audiences aware of this show and its themes. Moreover, the human past is refashioned through *TWD* in various subtle and sometimes overt guises, from 'prehistoric' hunter-gatherer lifestyles, allusions to biblical, classical and medieval pasts, as well as references to frontier communities of the American West and even the darker moments of Europe's 20th-century past (i.e. the Holocaust manifest in both *Terminus* and *the Sanctuary*). These are reimagined for a fictional post-apocalyptic work in a complex *bricolage*, with dystopian and utopian dimensions manifest in the walled communities in particular. Walls are represented as defending and defining both islands of civilizations and hellish prisons of subjugation and dehumanisation, and those who fail to join communities are shown, both good and evil, to inevitably fail to endure and wither away. Perhaps those who escape this characterisation as individuals and communities (Oceanside, *The Scavengers*) are the most interesting, but they are still bound into a world of walls against the wilderness.

As the characters traverse the landscape, they repeatedly encounter the material testimony to other failed strategies of survival, exhibited through the ruins and wreckage of their communities, destroyed either from within or without, and through the shambling ruins of the undead cadavers of their former occupants. Notably, however, racial and xenophobic divides of real-world walls are careful and starkly eschewed in this fictional universe; most of the communities, portrayed in terms of good or bad, seem to afford moral choices that are never explicitly framed in terms of divisions faced in our real world, notably ethnicity, religion, language or class (cf. Dinzey-Flores 2020). Only the brief encounter with The Vatos gang in Season 1 provides a (positive) glimpse of a majority Hispanic community, and here ethnicity is afforded cursory attention. Otherwise, the pervasive societal divisions that plague the contemporary United States are (largely) erased in the new communities forged after the fictional apocalypse. Although *TWD* might be criticised for attempting to take a neutral stance on, and thus erasing, the societal divisions of the US past and present, this is also why, despite many elisions and illusions, *TWD* offers much hope that real-world contemporary conditions need not determine the future.

For the public archaeology of frontiers and borderlands, *TWD* is but one manifestation of a wider trend in zombie horror fiction of revealing the salvation and horrors of walls, to keep out and to fence in. Other television shows extend and adapt these themes, from the spin-off *Fear the Walking Dead* where a host of walled and guarded communities are encountered and in which the US/México frontier provides a focus of attention in fashions which overtly critique the inequalities and discourses related to the border in our contemporary world (see Holst this volume). Yet within the scope of this study, *TWD* provides a ‘morbid space’ (Penfold-Mounce 2018) in which we not only reflect on our mortality – what it means to be human in the face of the collapse of civilization. In addition, *TWD* casts a critical and sustained attention on contemporary wall-building practices, their inherent seductive promise of security, and their deeply rooted inherent futilities, inequalities and violence. In *TWD*, it is less the undead that are the enemy, but other people. In this regard, *TWD* is a ‘mural environment’ in which our anxieties and tensions surrounding wall-building to distinguish the living and the dead, and the living from each other, are manifested and critiqued. By charting these fictional frontiers – mural practices and materialities defining the living against others and the undead in a world that is both about the past and the future – archaeologists can be more effectively equipped in tackling contemporary walls in historical perspective, and reveal a host of tropes and themes drawing on the human past in imagining our most feared and fascinating visions of a post-apocalyptic future.

## Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Pauline Clarke, Dr Kara Critchell, Kieran Gleave and Dr Alex Tankard for insightful comments and criticisms on earlier drafts of this chapter.

## Bibliography

- Brophy, K. 2012. Lovecraft archaeology. *Love Archaeology Magazine* 3: 30–33.
- Dinzey-Flores 2020. Race walls. (In)visible codes of neighbourhood inequality in Puerto Rico, in L. McAtackney and R. McGuire (eds) *Walling In and Walling Out: Why are We Building New Barriers to Divide Us?* 47–61. Santa Fe: University of New Mexico Press.
- Elliot, A.B.R. 2018. *Medievalism, Politics and Mass Media. Appropriating the Middle Ages in the Twenty-First Century*. Woodbridge: Boydell.
- Hall, M. 2009. Making the past present: cinematic narratives of the Middle Ages, in R. Gilchrist and A. Reynolds (eds) *Reflections: 50 Years of Medieval Archaeology, 1957–2007*. Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 30: 489–511. Leeds: Maney.

- Hall, M. 2020. 'It's the end of the world as we know it...': reforging Ragnarök through popular culture, in H. Williams and P. Clarke (eds) *Digging into the Dark Ages: Early Medieval Public Archaeologies*: 252–367. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Holtorf, C. 2005. *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas: Archaeology as Popular Culture*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira.
- Killgrove, K. 2018. Archaeologists find ancient knife-hand prosthesis on medieval warrior, 12 April 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kristinakilgrove/2018/04/12/archaeologists-find-ancient-knife-hand-prosthesis-on-medieval-warrior/#703ffde63915>
- Kobińska, D. 2013. We are all zombies. An archaeology of *The Walking Dead*, Popanth, 24 July 2013, viewed 16 October 2020, <https://popanth.com/article/we-are-all-zombies-an-archaeology-of-the-walking-dead>
- Frackowiak, M., K. Kajda, and D. Kobińska. 2014. Night of the living dead: modern ruins and archaeology. 3 January 2014, viewed 16 October 2020, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/archaeolog/cgi-bin/archaeolog/2014/01/03/night-of-the-living-dead-modern-ruins-and-archaeology/>
- Mattison, A. 2017. Archaeological finds prove that fear of the walking dead was very real to medieval minds. *The Conversation* 11 April 2017, <https://theconversation.com/archaeological-finds-prove-that-fear-of-the-walking-dead-was-very-real-to-medieval-minds-76068>
- McAtackney, L and R. McGuire. (eds) 2020. *Walling In and Walling Out: Why Are We Building New Barriers to Divide Us?* Santa Fe: University of New Mexico Press.
- Moshenska, G. 2012. M.R. James and the archaeological uncanny. *Antiquity* 86: 1192–1201.
- Mullins, P. 2013. Apocalyptic imagination and *The Walking Dead* fandom, *Archaeology and Material Culture*, 9 August 2013, <https://paulmullins.wordpress.com/2013/08/09/apocalyptic-imagination-and-the-walking-dead-fandom/>
- Parker, J. (ed.) 2009. *Written on Stone: The Cultural Reception of British Prehistoric Monuments*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- Penfold-Mounce, R. 2018. *Death, the Dead and Popular Culture*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Porck, T. 2017. An Anglo-Saxon anecdote: Cnut the Great and the walking dead, 24 April 2017, <https://thijsporck.com/2017/04/24/walking-dead/>
- Reinhard, A. 2018. *Archaeogaming: An Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games*. Oxford: Berghahn.
- Russell, M. (ed.) 2002. *Digging Holes in Popular Culture: Archaeology and Science Fiction*. Oxford: Oxbow.
- Sanders, K. 2009. *Bodies in the Bog and the Archaeological Imagination*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schablitsky, J. (ed.) 2007. *Box Office Archaeology: Refining Hollywood's Portrayals of the Past*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Williams, H. 2006. *Death and Memory in Early Medieval Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, H. 2015. The Walking Dead: creating zombie heritage, 13 August 2015, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2015/08/13/the-walking-dead-creating-zombie-heritage/>
- Williams, H. 2017a. *The Walking Dead* Season 1 – towards a zombie mortuary archaeology, 19 Jan 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/01/19/the-walking-dead-season-1-towards-a-zombie-mortuary-archaeology/>
- Williams, H. 2017b. *The Walking Dead* Season 4 – an emerging cemetery culture, 18 February 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/02/18/walking-dead-season-4-an-emerging-cemetery-culture/>



- Williams, H. 2017c. *The Walking Dead* and the Holocaust part 1, 31 May 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/05/31/the-walking-dead-and-the-holocaust-part-1-technologies-of-power-and-the-undead/>
- Williams, H. 2017d. 'Let the trees have him'. Dividing the dead in *The Walking Dead* Season 6, 4 November 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/11/04/let-the-trees-have-him-dividing-the-dead-in-the-walking-dead-season-6/>
- Williams, H. 2017e. 'In our memory' Alexandria's memorial wall in *The Walking Dead* Season 6, 17 November 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/11/17/in-our-memory-alexandrias-memorial-wall-in-the-walking-dead-season-6/>
- Williams, H. 2017f. The power of the past in *The Walking Dead* Season 6, 23 November 2017, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/11/23/the-power-of-the-past-in-the-walking-dead-season-6/>
- Williams, H. 2017g. Graves as resistance in *The Walking Dead* season 7, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2017/12/12/graves-as-resistance-the-walking-dead-season-7/>
- Williams, H. 2018a. Introduction: public archaeologies of death and memory, in H. Williams and L. Richardson (eds) *Death in the Contemporary World: Perspectives from Public Archaeology*, AP Online Journal of Public Archaeology 8(2) Special Issue 3: 1–24. <http://revistas.jasarqueologia.es/index.php/APJournal/article/view/229>
- Williams, H. 2018b. The dead, in *The Walking Dead* Season 8, 21 April 2018, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2018/04/21/the-dead-in-the-walking-dead-season-8/>
- Williams, H. 2020a. The Hilltop's cemetery in *The Walking Dead* season 9, 15 July 2020, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2020/07/15/hilltops-cemetery-in-the-walking-dead-season-9/>
- Williams, H. 2020b. Heads on stakes – from the Early Middle Ages to the Walking Dead, 16 July 2020, <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2020/07/16/heads-on-stakes-from-the-early-middle-ages-to-the-walking-dead/>